



REPORT
ON THE
HEALTH OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH
OF WEST BROMWICH,

FOR THE YEAR 1903, BY

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Medical Officer of Health to the Borough.

TO WHICH ARE APPENDED THE REPORTS OF THE SANITARY
INSPECTOR, FOOD AND DRUGS INSPECTOR, AND PUBLIC
ANALYST.

WEST BROMWICH:

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MUNICIPAL BOROUGH OF WEST BROMWICH.

Population, 1901 Census	65,175
Estimated Population, 1903	66,558
Area	...	...	...	5,860 acres

Rateable Value of Property assessed to the
 Relief of the Poor, November, 1903 ... £220,842 5 0

Rateable Value of Property assessed to the
 General District Rate, November, 1903 £202,121 17 6

Number of Houses in the Borough, November,
 1903 ... 14,016

*TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
SANITARY COMMITTEE OF THE COUNTY
BOROUGH OF WEST BROMWICH.*

GENTLEMEN,

The thirteenth year of my official position as your Health Officer has been in many ways less eventful than many of its predecessors and is more distinguished by the lack of incident than by any striking facts or lessons. Introductory

The natural decline in Scarlet Fever, after an epidemic of such magnitude as that in the year 1902 has been maintained both in our own town and in the districts about us which were similarly affected.

The importation of Smallpox into the Borough has been a continual cause of grave anxiety to your sanitary staff, and so long as it exists in the populous centres from which so many of our casual visitors come, so long will there be this danger. Owing to the hearty co-operation of the medical men and the drastic measures adopted of destroying as much of the infected goods as possible, the epidemic was kept within bounds, and now that permission has at length been received from the Local Government Board to erect a proper Smallpox Hospital, the town will be better equipped for future outbreaks. The delay in making this provision has been due almost entirely to the difficulty of getting any work through the Local Government Office, owing to the pressure of business and not to any lack of energy on the part of your own officers.

The work done by the department is fully set out in the appended report, and is fortunately not accompanied by a proportionate increase in expenditure. It will be found that the expenses of the Health Department are fairly constant, and except for the Hospital accounts, which of course cannot be accurately estimated, there is no increase in the cost of carrying out our work.

Introductory

I cannot conclude this preface without expressing my great and sincere satisfaction at the continued harmony which prevails in the Health Department, where all work loyally together for a common end, and also my thanks for the continued confidence of the Committee.

I remain,

Yours faithfully,

HERBERT MANLEY,

M.A., M.D., D.P.H., ETC.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Population

The population of West Bromwich for the year 1903 is estimated by the office of the Registrar-General at 66,558, and the figures in this report are based upon that estimate. The annual rate of increase is thus fixed at 694, which is in my opinion slightly in excess of the true increase; at the same time the large number of new houses which are being built in the town points to a decided increase, and that in houses of a better type than those which are being gradually pulled down or closed. The number of inhabited houses is returned at 14,016, giving a rate of 4.6 inhabitants per house, which is by no means excessive.

Births

During the year 2,193 births were registered, which gives a rate of 33.9; the comparative value of this rate can be seen at a glance in the appended table, and calls for no special comment. The fall in the birth-rate is now a matter of common knowledge, and takes its place as one of the vexed social questions of the day. It is as usual a matter of regret that our infantile death-rate does not show a proportionate decrease either here or indeed elsewhere. The number of children who died under one year of age amounts to 164 per 1,000 births, which is a slight increase on the two preceding years, though 7 per cent. less than the decennial average.

Death-rate

Between one year and five years of age the deaths show a marked decline, and only 174 were recorded, against 316 in the preceding year. As this decrease is mainly found

under the heading of "Other Causes," it points rather to a general improvement in the treatment of young children than to any special reduction of preventable disease. At the same time attention may be directed to the fact that there are very few deaths from Scarlet Fever, and that severe Diarrhœa and other intestinal troubles are absent. Death-rate

The deaths from zymotic diseases are very considerably below the average, and in this respect the returns are distinctly a matter for congratulation. No death took place from Smallpox. The mortality from the rest of the diseases of this class amounts to 1.9 per 1,000, as against a ten years' average of 2.4.

The details of the deaths from zymotic disease are as follows:—Scarlet Fever, 24; Diphtheria, 12; typhoid Fever, 8; Measles, 44; Whooping Cough, 13; and Diarrhœa, 38; total, 139.

Various theories are being put forward to account for the diminished mortality of the past two years, and, as is usually the case, the truth is not to be found in any single factor. The exceptional character of the weather, the absence of dust, the increased use of electricity, and last, but by no means least, the consistent and persistent efforts of the sanitary army throughout the kingdom are probably all more or less concerned in this improvement. Two main causes suggest themselves to me—the absence of dust owing to the wet, with a consequent decrease of catarrhal affections, and the shortness of money owing to bad trade.

It only remains to speak of the general death-rate. The total of those who died in the Borough was 1,566, but included in this number are those who have been reported as belonging to other districts, and whose details will be found either in the City of Birmingham or the constituent parishes of the West Bromwich Union. The net deaths amount to 1,093, giving a death-rate of 16.3, which is the lowest death-rate recorded for our town.

Seventy deaths were the subject of enquiry by the Coroner, and twenty are returned as uncertified. It is much to be regretted that the Legislature does not deal with the question of death certification and inquests, so that greater

Death-rate accuracy might be insured, together with the avoidance of a number of wholly unnecessary enquiries by juries, whose verdict is of little value.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Scarlet Fever Last year, in dealing with this portion of my report, I devoted much space to the question of Scarlet Fever in our own and the surrounding districts, and I now propose briefly to complete the figures there given for the remainder of the epidemic.

In West Bromwich 320 cases of Scarlet Fever were reported, as against 1,046 in the preceding year. The majority of these cases fell in the earlier months of the year, the latter portion being almost entirely free from any zymotic disease. We thus registered in the three years 1,486 cases, of which 569 were treated in Hospital. Twenty of these cases died, giving the very creditable mortality of 3.5 per cent. The occurrence of Smallpox in the Borough interfered very largely with the consistent isolation of our Scarlet Fever cases and of the 227 cases which from various causes were not removed to Hospital, no less than 24 died, or at the rate of 10.5 per cent. It is unfortunately necessary to emphasise these figures, because it is the unpleasant experience of the sanitary department to be told that patients are removed to the Hospital to be killed, whereas there can be no question that apart from any question of medical treatment the value of skilled nursing can hardly be over estimated. I have no wish to exaggerate the merits of the matron and her staff, but it is my duty to record the fact that they have given every satisfaction during the long and arduous period of the Scarlet Fever epidemic and the subsequent outbreak of Smallpox.

Smallpox Coming now to the outbreak of Smallpox, there have been reported 49 cases, of which particulars are here appended:—

I. The first case was reported from the Workhouse on New Year's Day, and was promptly seen by me, in conjunction with the Resident Medical Officer of the Institution. The man was a tramp and had four good marks of vaccination. The case certainly presented many of the charac-

teristic signs of modified Smallpox, and I admitted it. I am inclined, as the result of observation in Hospital, to doubt if this case really was Smallpox, and the man was released after eight days' detention. He subsequently went on tramp again, and no more was heard of his adventures.

II. On January 24th my attention was called to three cases in Sams Lane, which proved to be the commencement of a most troublesome and complicated outbreak of Smallpox. Minute enquiry succeeded in tracing the infection to a relative from the Potteries, who had visited the town a fortnight before, and who was traced back to an infected house in Hanley, where the disease was then very prevalent. The most careful precautions were taken to observe everyone who could by any possibility have been infected from the cases removed, but between January 24th and June 17th no less than 22 cases occurred in this neighbourhood, the area including Boulton Road, Sams Lane, Barton Street, and Richard Street South, as well as other cases which were not reported, but which there is good reason to believe were of a very mild character, and thus escaped the notice of any doctor.

Of these 22 cases eight were unvaccinated, but the question of vaccination will be dealt with later in the Report and the figures set out in detail.

III. On February 2nd a case was reported from a common lodging house in Hill Top, and promptly removed to Hospital. Every assistance was given by the lodging house keeper in isolating the remaining inmates, but a second case occurred on February 16th in the person of the room-mate of the first. Every precaution had been taken to keep this man isolated, and no further cases were reported.

IV. At the time of the outbreak there were in Hospital a number of cases of Scarlet Fever, in a block at a considerable distance from the ward used for Smallpox. Two of these children (both unvaccinated) developed Smallpox, the dates being February 13th and March 2nd respectively. On February 10th the Hospital porter, who from some unexplained cause had not been re-vaccinated while on active service in South Africa, developed the disease and was placed

Smallpox

in a ward, and on June 6th his wife also showed signs of Smallpox. This makes a total of four inmates who contracted the disease.

V. The Hill Top outbreak commenced on May 4th in the person of a painter who had been employed in painting the exterior of the unoccupied wards, laundry and outbuildings. As his duties did not take him into or even within a considerable distance of the Smallpox ward, it is not easy to say how he acquired the complaint. Eight cases (one doubtful) were subsequently traced to this source, and the outbreak extended over six weeks.

VI. On June 6th an old man residing in Seagar Street was reported, who had been employed in Walsall for some time. He was removed to Hospital, and within a fortnight three of his relatives were detected with Smallpox, and removed likewise.

VII. The following miscellaneous cases occurred and are recorded in their order:—

1. The signalman at Swan Village, residing in Jervoise Street, who appears to have mysteriously acquired the disease in Birmingham on his only holiday (Good Friday), and who had a very severe attack. He had never been vaccinated.

2. A butcher employed in this and a neighbouring town, who resided in Oxford Road. Origin of disease untraced.

3. Three cases in one house in Roebuck Street. These were traced to a contact with some unreported cases among Messrs. Tangye's workpeople of a very mild type.

4. One case in Arthur Street, traced to a contact in Smethwick with an infected house.

5. A school teacher in Trinity Road, traced to a suburb of the town of Lancaster, where there were several cases of smallpox at the time of contact.

VIII. In addition to these cases two were admitted to Hospital from outside, one from Handsworth and one from Perry Barr. These do not call for any comment in this Report.

From a Hospital point of view we have been fortunate in having no fatal cases, although eight cases were of a confluent type, and eight others, though not confluent, were of a very severe character. Of the eight confluent cases five were unvaccinated, and similarly in the severe class there were also five unvaccinated cases.

Smallpox

In the mild cases, 35 in number, there were also five cases stated to be unvaccinated. No cases have been classified as vaccinated or not vaccinated except upon strict enquiry from the parents or if old enough from the patients themselves. Four cases had been vaccinated recently before admission, but it was not easy to say what effect was produced by the operation. In the absence of fatal cases I make no comment upon statistics which are obviously inconclusive.

Disinfection was carried out by means of chlorine, and as many things as possible were removed to Hospital and treated by steam. Certain articles were unavoidably destroyed, and your Committee have considered any reasonable claim for compensation. In one case the house was used as a home workplace for making paper bags, and naturally all the material, finished or unfinished, was removed and burned. Full trade value was given in this case.

The rest of the notifiable diseases call for very little comment at the present moment, but it will suffice briefly to indicate what has taken place.

Typhoid Fever was responsible for 63 cases, of which 10 were fatal, giving a death-rate per cent. cases of nearly 16. It is earnestly to be hoped that with the steady and gradual improvement in the middens, the increased supervision of the milk supply and the use of the Isolation Hospital, that in a few years' time we shall hear less of this complaint.

Typhoid
Fever

Diphtheria and Croup were responsible for 41 cases, but many of them were of a very mild character. Twenty deaths were registered from the two causes, and although true Diphtheria is but seldom seen in this town it still possesses a grave fatality. The verification of cases by bacteriological tests is still but little utilised, and it has now been decided to make a temporary arrangement with

Diphtheria
and Croup

Diphtheria
and Croup

the University of Birmingham at reduced charges. Should this still fail to be utilised it will be my duty to advise that it be left to the individual expenditure of those who make use of it.

Measles

A slight outbreak of Measles occurred at the close of the year, but it was not of sufficient magnitude to disturb the attendance at the Schools, and needs no comment.

Pulmonary
Tuberculosis

Pulmonary Tuberculosis—better known as Consumption—claimed 65 victims, which is a shade below the average death-rate from this cause in West Bromwich. So far no proposal has been made that this disease shall be provided with a sanatorium in West Bromwich, nor am I ready to recommend it.

SANITARY WORK.

Alteration of
Midden
System

The details of the general work of the Sanitary Department will be found fully set out in the report of the Sanitary Inspector. The process of converting the whole town from the midden system to the system of water carriage is of necessity a slow one, but the progress now being made is very consistent and steady, and is being accomplished with a minimum of friction.

Removal of
Dry Refuse

The removal of dry refuse and the provision of dustbins continues to increase, and during the year the Corporation have acquired a tip, which will suffice for some years to come for the disposal of dry ashes, etc. It would eventually be possible, if it were so desired, to erect a destructor on this site, but this project is too costly in the present state of municipal finance. It will eventually become necessary, but by that time the conditions under which our work is carried out will have materially altered.

In addition to this a fresh site at a greater distance from dwelling houses has been leased for the disposal of faecal matter, and it is to be hoped that this will suffice until the process of conversion is complete.

It may be well to add that so far no case has been dealt with which has not been declared to be a nuisance, and consequently it has not yet been found necessary to pay any

compensation under the local Act of Parliament. There are, however, sufficient cases of dilapidated and insanitary middens to occupy your attention for many months to come, and there is no need to face the question of compulsory conversion of sound privies until all the unsound ones are converted.

Removal of
Dry Refuse

A constant supervision has been exercised over the Factories and Workshops of the Borough, and in addition to the routine work done in the department, sixteen notices have been received from H.M. Inspector of Factories, and the cause of complaint removed.

Factories and
Workshops

Two only of these notices related to factories, of which one was for want of proper cleanliness, and the other to provide suitable closet accommodation for females.

The remaining notices dealt with workshops, and referred to the state of closet accommodation, notably for women. It is much to be regretted that women should still be employed in such occupations as breeze-washing and other kindred matters, which hardly seem suitable for them.

Your Medical Officer is keenly alive to the general conditions under which labour is employed in this Borough, and as far as can be judged there is very little cause for complaint. Diseases of occupation are almost unknown here, and the health of the workpeople generally is absolutely unaffected by the nature of their employment.

It has also been found necessary to enforce the law relating to bakehouses in four instances. Your Sanitary Officers have always been careful to do their utmost to secure the wholesomeness of all premises upon which articles for the food of man are either stored or prepared.

So far it has not been found practicable to deal with the ice-cream vendors who invade the Borough, especially on Sunday, and whose goods are mainly prepared in the neighbouring city of Birmingham, but every effort has been made to supervise any attempt to store or to manufacture ice-cream in the Borough and to ensure cleanliness upon such premises.

Ice-cream
Vendors

Housing of
the Working
Classes

The Acts relating to the Housing of the Working Classes have not been neglected during the year. Thirteen insanitary houses have been closed, and in two other cases such radical improvements have been made as to remodel the dwelling.

Travelling
Tents and
Vans

The presence in the Borough of travelling tents and vans is a constant source of danger, for there is no class of tramp more likely to import Smallpox than those who mixing with the lowest and dirtiest classes of the population, are at the same time free from the supervision and cleanly precautions of the casual ward. Your Medical Officer and his Inspectors have never permitted a van to remain in the Borough for 48 hours without subjecting its inmates to a rigorous examination and inspection. In one case in which the vans were placed on land a few yards outside the Borough boundary, a successful appeal was made to Lord Dartmouth, through his agents, not to permit any of his tenants to let their land for the occupation of van dwellers. Every effort has been made to point out to owners the undesirability of encouraging these people, and it is much to be regretted that our neighbours in Handsworth and Smethwick continue to endure their permanent presence at all periods of the year.

TABLE I.—VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING 1903 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.						Deaths of Non- residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.	Nett Deaths at all ages belonging to the District.			
		Number.	Rate.	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all ages.		Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.	9.			10.	11.	12.	13.
				Number	Rate per 1,000 Births registered	Number	Rate.								
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.			
1893	60640	2194	36·2	464	211	1481	24·4	267	100	No information.	1381	22·7			
1894	61210	2207	35·5	337	152	1105	18·4	214	102		1003	16·3			
1895	61780	2221	35·9	349	157	1286	20·8	218	83		1203	19·4			
1896	62350	2198	35·2	399	181	1350	21·5	236	102		1248	20·0			
1897	62920	2280	36·4	398	175	1347	21·4	239	104		1243	19·7			
1898	63490	2269	35·7	415	182	1360	21·4	239	112		1148	18·0			
1899	64060	2364	36·8	425	179	1307	30·4	207	99		1200	18·8			
1900	64630	2242	34·2	439	191	1453	22·4	256	106		1347	20·8			
1901	65200	2229	34·0	363	163	1211	18·5	205	88		1123	17·2			
1902	65910	2287	34·6	372	162	1433	21·7	255	126		1307	19·3			
Averages for years 1893-1902		2249	35·4	396	176	1333	22·1	233	102	1221	19·3				
1903	66558	2193	33·9	376	164	1199	18·1	223	106	1093	16·3				

TABLE II.

I. Institutions within the District receiving sick and infirm persons from outside the District.	II. Institutions outside the District receiv- ing sick and infirm persons from the District.	III. Other Institutions, the deaths in which have been dis- tributed among the several localities in the District.
1.—West Bromwich Union Workhouse 2.—West Bromwich District Hospital 3.—Pauper Schools for West Bromwich and Walsall 4.—Infectious Hospital 5.—Sandwell Hall Asylum	None	None

TABLE III.
CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING THE
YEAR 1903.

Notifiable Disease.					Cases notified in whole District. At all Ages.	Number of Cases removed to Hospital.
Small-pox	...	...	...	...	49	49
Cholera	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	29	Nil
Membranous Croup	...	...	...	...	12	Nil
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	82	Nil
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	320	93
Typhus Fever	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Enteric Fever	...	...	...	...	63	Nil
Relapsing Fever	..	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Continued Fever	...	...	...	...	1	Nil
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	...	4	Nil
Plague	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Total	...	...	...	...	560	142

TABLE IV.

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH DURING YEAR 1903.

CAUSES OF DEATH. 1.	Deaths in or belonging to whole District at subjoined Ages.							Total Deaths in Public Institu- tions in the District. 9.
	All ages. 2.	Under 1 year. 3.	1 and under 5. 4.	5 and under 15. 5.	15 and under 25. 6.	25 and under 65. 7.	65 and up- wards. 8.	
Measles	44	11	30	2	...	1	...	...
Scarlet Fever	24	3	16	4	...	1	...	2
Whooping Cough	13	5	7	1	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria and Mem- branous Croup	12	1	10	1	...	..	...	1
Croup	7	7	...	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever	8	...	...	1	3	4	...	2
Epidemic Influenza	6	...	...	...	1	4	1	...
Diarrhœa	38	22	12	2	...	...	2	2
Enteritis	32	25	5	1	1	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever	3	...	...	...	2	1	...	...
Erysipelas	4	1	...	...	...	2	1	2
Phthisis	45	...	1	5	7	31	1	20
Other Tubercular Dis- eases... ..	69	38	17	6	1	7	...	...
Cancer, Malignant Dis- ease	41	...	...	...	1	29	11	23
Bronchitis	145	46	28	1	1	40	29	28
Pneumonia	54	15	16	1	3	17	2	...
Pleurisy	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	...
Other Diseases of Res- piratory Organs	8	3	...	...	1	4	...	...
Alcoholism — Cirrhosis of Liver	12	...	...	...	...	11	1	...
Venereal Diseases	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
Premature Birth	59	59	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diseases and Accidents of Parturition	12	4	..	...	3	5	...	...
Heart Diseases	40	2	...	1	1	27	9	22
Accidents	29	4	3	4	2	11	5	18
Suicides	10	...	...	...	...	9	1	1
All Other Causes	373	127	29	7	8	80	122	102
All Causes	1093	376	174	37	35	286	185	223

Sanitary Inspector's Report

FOR THE YEAR 1903.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

INTRODUCTION.

I have the honour to submit my fifth Annual Report as Sanitary Inspector for the County Borough of West Bromwich.

Only one change has occurred in the sanitary staff during the past year, the Junior District Inspector, J. J. Jenkins, resigning, in order to take up a more lucrative appointment, his place being filled by the promotion of the Office Clerk, W. R. Martin.

Notwithstanding this change, and the consequent temporary retardation of the work of the department, I am pleased to be able to report that the total number of visits of all descriptions has increased from 27,010 to 33,053, the principal increases occurring as regards house-to-house inspections, 2,430 more houses having been systematically inspected in 1903 than in 1902, a very large number of visits having also been made in connection with the compilation of a new record of sanitary conveniences, practically every yard in the Borough having been inspected for this purpose. The number of permanent sanitary improvements which have been effected, and particulars of which are given in Table III., also afford testimony to the steady progress that is being effected throughout the district. I am glad to be able to again testify to the useful work performed by the Assistant Inspectors, J. Cotterell, H. Topping, and W. R. Martin.

GENERAL SANITARY WORK.

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE INSPECTIONS.

The provisions of Section 92 of the Public Health Act, requiring Local Authorities to make systematic inspections of their districts, have received due attention, no fewer than

3,906 houses in streets in Greets Green, Sandwell, and Spon Lane Wards having been examined in detail, as compared with 1,475 houses in 1902. These visitations were, as usual, of great service in securing the detection and subsequent remedying of a large number of insanitary conditions, including filthy and dilapidated houses and outbuildings, and nuisances for which occupiers were responsible.

MISCELLANEOUS INSPECTIONS.

Under the head of Miscellaneous Inspections, which numbered 12,464, are comprised the periodical inspection of the common yards throughout the Borough, the investigation of premises concerning which complaints have been received, and the visits made in connection with the sanitary survey. The common yard inspections proved useful in keeping occupiers alive to their responsibilities in the matter of cleanliness of sanitary conveniences. These yards are as a rule inspected monthly. In case, however, occupiers have been found to persistently neglect their obligations, more frequent visits are paid. One drain was tested with a smoke rocket, but the recent purchase of an "Eclipse" smoke-testing machine should facilitate future work in this respect.

NOTICES SERVED.

The first step taken when sanitary defects are not remediable by verbal instructions, is the serving of a preliminary notice or notices, the number of notices served being 1,900, as compared with 1,663 in the preceding year. Particulars of these notices are given in Table II.

The premises referred to in notices were re-visited by the District Inspectors or myself, to ascertain if the necessary works had been complied with or if they were being undertaken in a satisfactory manner, the number of re-inspections so made being 5,429, as compared with 4,078 in 1902. Six hundred and twenty-five letters were afterwards addressed to owners, urging compliance with notices, failing which the premises were reported to you at your monthly meetings, 207 statutory notices being subsequently served. Of these notices 149 were served under the Public Health Acts, and 58 under various sections of the West Bromwich Corporation Act, 1890.

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS EFFECTED.

The number of sanitary improvements effected, viz., 5,123, particulars of which are given in Table III., is most gratifying, as showing that the movement to permanently improve the conditions under which so many occupiers are compelled to live, is still making headway. The number of nuisances actually abated was 2,580, as compared with 1,994 in 1902.

Filthy and Dilapidated Houses and Outbuildings.

Six hundred and forty-seven houses have been cleansed and whitewashed, the internal brickwork, plastering and woodwork having also received attention in 173 cases. Leaking roofs, to the number of 127, have been made watertight, whilst at 130 premises spouting has been repaired or renewed. Attempts to deal with outbuildings have also been successful, 238 wash-houses, etc., having been cleansed and repaired.

Surface Paving and Drainage in Yards.

In 77 yards the surface paving has either been extended or renewed and repaired, some 11 dangerous wells or cisterns having also been filled in. A list of disused wells not at present filled in is being compiled, and immediately any subsidence is apparent the owner is communicated with. In 29 cases premises hitherto unconnected with the sewer have been properly drained, whilst 238 lengths of stoneware pipe drains have been laid for the use of 761 houses, in substitution of the unsatisfactory surface channels and entry gullies. For convenience of access to such drains, 183 manholes or inspection chambers have been provided, as many as 705 new gully traps to receive waste water, etc., having also been fixed. Ten untrapped drain inlets have been properly trapped, whilst 42 choked drains have been opened and cleansed.

Privy and Water-Closet Accommodation.

Nuisances arising from foul and dilapidated or leaking middens were again numerous, and 362 notices were served in connection therewith. The temporary expedient of cementing was resorted to in 99 instances, and with the

customary minimum degree of success, fæcal matter finding its way out of the supposed watertight middens in several instances very shortly after the "patching" process had been undertaken. It must be recollected, moreover, that the actual leakages on to the surfaces of yards, etc., bear but a small proportion to the leakages which occur from middens into the subsoil. In one case, concerning which some controversy had arisen as to the existence of a percolation, a small hole was made in the ground surrounding the privy, with the result that the hole at once became filled with an offensive black liquid, and when middens have been abolished it has almost invariably been found that the subsoil for some distance away has been extensively saturated with this filth.

In view of the well-known relation which exists between zymotic diseases and a polluted subsoil, the perpetuation of such leaking structures is of course a matter of serious moment.

The progress made in previous years in the removal of insanitary middens has been maintained, 607 privies having been abolished, and 622 water-closets substituted, of which three only were of the waste water variety.

In four cases, where notices to convert privies had not been complied with, the Corporation themselves executed the necessary works.

This small proportion of cases in default is in keeping with our general experience, owners generally having shown great readiness to assist in the work of conversion, as is shown by the fact that notwithstanding the fact that during the last three years over 1,700 water-closets have been substituted for privies, only 143 official representations under the West Bromwich Corporation Act, 1900, have been made by you.

Dr. Darra Mair, of the Local Government Board, visited the district for the purpose of a departmental enquiry into the working of the Act, and investigated several places concerning which notices had been served or which I considered were suitable cases under the Act. In every instance he expressed his approval of the action I had taken.

One hundred and thirty-nine choked water-closets have been opened and cleansed by owners or occupiers after notice, defects in flushing arrangements, etc., of water-closets being made good in 102 cases.

Four new urinals in connection with licensed houses have also been provided.

OCCUPIERS' NUISANCES.

Of the 1,900 preliminary notices, 558 were served on occupiers, directing their attention to overcrowding, to the filthy state of houses and outbuildings, or the keeping of swine or fowl in such a state as to create a nuisance. The overcrowding question is one of the most difficult we have had to deal with, owing to the limited opportunities we possess, but some very flagrant cases have been detected and dealt with. Amongst the 87 cases abated the two following may be cited:—(1) In a small one-roomed tenement were living and sleeping occupier and his wife, their married son and his wife and two children, two adult males also residing in the house during the day. (2) In a house with two small bedrooms were living and sleeping occupier and his wife and their seven sons, aged 24, 19, 16, 14, 12, 9, and seven, and two daughters, aged 27 and 22.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

The number of occasions in which it was necessary to issue summonses for the abatement of nuisances is again very low—two summonses only under Section 94 of the Public Health Act, 1875, being issued. In the first of these cases, the summons was withdrawn by arrangement, on the owners undertaking to execute the necessary works; and in the second case an order was made on the owner to carry out the provisions of the notice and to pay the costs.

WATER SUPPLY.

Eight samples of water from wells were taken during the year and submitted to the Borough Analyst, an unfavourable report being received in every instance. The owners subsequently had the public water supply laid on to their premises.

INSPECTION OF SLAUGHTER-HOUSES AND FOOD SUPPLY.

Nine applications for slaughter-house licenses were received, seven of which were granted. The total number of slaughter-houses on the Register is 33, of which 11 are subject to annual licenses. A summons for slaughtering on unlicensed premises was dismissed.

The Meat Inspector (Mr. Topping) has made 1,241 visits of inspection, and has examined 1,761 sides and 749 quarters of beef, 1,195 carcasses of mutton and lamb, in addition to slaughtered pigs and live animals of every description.

Tuberculosis in cattle was detected in 17 instances, but in only a single instance was it found desirable to recommend entire destruction of the carcass. In the remaining carcasses, the parts directly affected were removed and destroyed. The total amount of meat seized or surrendered and afterwards condemned or destroyed was as follows:—

Beef, diseased or unsound	...	...	1367 lbs.
Mutton	„	...	160 „
Pork	„	...	300 „
			1817 lbs.

or 16 cwt. 25 lbs.

Magistrates' orders for destruction were obtained in nine cases, but it should be stated that by far the larger quantity of meat destroyed and condemned was surrendered by the respective owners.

A prosecution for the sale of unsound food was instituted in one case, the occupier being fined 40s. and costs.

In addition to the foregoing inspections 1,573 visits were paid to butchers' shops, and 615 visits to fish, game, and poultry shops, and 112 to bakehouses.

INSPECTION OF DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.

Eighteen applications for the registration of dairies, cowsheds and milkshops were received, and 12 premises subsequently registered. One hundred and eighty-nine inspec-

tions were made during the year. There are now 30 cowsheds and 54 milkshops or dairies on the Register.

The new regulations with respect to cubic space being now in force, a special effort to enforce the regulation in cowsheds is to be made during the ensuing year.

INSPECTION OF COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

Owing to the prevalence of Smallpox in the neighbourhood during the early months of the year, the three common lodging houses were inspected every working day for a considerable period, and frequently on Sundays in addition, no fewer than 516 visits having been made during the year by the District Inspectors or by myself. Notwithstanding the large number of inmates in the Holloway Bank establishment when the first case occurred, one further case only resulted, the proprietor rendering every assistance in the efforts made to prevent the spread of the disease. We have, moreover, no reason to suppose that the disease was carried to other districts by inmates of this establishment.

INSPECTION OF CANAL BOATS.

The number of canal boats inspected again manifest a satisfactory increase, 318 having been examined by Assistant Inspector Cotterell. The following infringements were reported:—Want of registration, 4 cases; certificate not produced, 1 case; marking, 1 case; overcrowding, 5 cases; cleanliness, 1 case; dilapidations, 10 cases. These infringements, not being of serious descriptions, no prosecutions were instituted, but the customary intimation notices were sent. Of the 20 notices served, 16 had been complied with at the end, correspondence taking place with the owners of the four remaining boats when the report was transmitted to the Local Government Board.

The customary visit by Owen Llewellyn, Esq., H.M. Inspector of Canal Boats, was made, and the books produced to him, no complaint being forthcoming as to the way in which the work was carried on.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

During the year several applications were received for permission to establish the business of a rag and bone dealer, one of which was acceded to. The fat melting works at Hall End has been frequently visited by me, and owing to complaints having been received respecting the emission of offensive effluvia, proceedings were instituted against the occupiers, the hearing of which was adjourned at the end of the year to enable the occupiers to submit a scheme for the condensation and destruction of all offensive fumes from the melting vats.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The number of cases of Infectious Diseases reported on, viz., 474, was smaller than usual, but in view of the successive independent outbreaks of Smallpox the work was of a most exacting character. The whole of the inspectorial work incident to these Smallpox cases was undertaken by me, personally, the number of observation visits to houses in which "contacts" resided, etc., exceeding 1,000, a considerable proportion of such visits being made in the early morning or evening, or on Sundays. The constant supervision of "contacts" proved very useful in preventing the spread of the disease, the number of houses actually attacked being very small.

REMOVAL OF NIGHTSOIL AND DRY REFUSE.

With the exception of one of the wards the work of nightsoil removal has been carried on in a far more expeditious manner than in previous years, the number of privies emptied—8,279—being actually larger than last year, notwithstanding the diminution in the number of these receptacles, a fact which points to the more frequent removal of their contents. The cost of nightsoil work amounted to £3,208 11s. 11d.; and the removal of the contents of dust bins by the staff of the Council an additional £513 2s. 1d.; the total cost of the removal of nightsoil and refuse amounting to £3,721 14s. The number of dust bins on the list at the end of the year was 3,574, as compared with 2,710 last year, but in view of the fact that

a considerable proportion of these additional bins are removable by the respective contractors, the actual increased cost to the Corporation is very small, amounting only to £29 3s. 2d.

The special sanitary survey previously referred to, which has now placed us in a position to compile an exact register of the number and nature of the sanitary conveniences attached to every house in the Borough, also revealed the interesting fact that the number of water-closets in the district shows a distinct preponderance over the number of privies.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

H. H. SPEARS, Assoc. San. Inst.,
Chief Sanitary Inspector.

1st January, 1904.

TABLE I.

House-to-house inspections	3906
Miscellaneous inspections, including inspections of common yards and houses concerning which complaints have been received ...	12464
Re-inspections	5429
Visits to slaughter-houses	1368
„ „ dairies, cowsheds, and milkshops ...	189
„ „ shops, butchers	1573
„ „ „ fish, game, and poultry... ..	615
„ „ bakehouses, etc.	112
„ „ common lodging houses	516
Number of canal boats inspected	318
Cases of infectious disease visited and reported on	474
Other visits in connection with cases of infectious disease	1170
Number of privies, etc., inspected and reported for emptying by staff	1998
Number of privies, etc., re-inspected after emptying	2480
Sundry Visits	441
<hr/>	
Total number of inspections and visits ...	33053
<hr/>	
Number of preliminary notices served	1899
„ „ statutory notices served	207
„ „ legal proceedings taken	5
„ „ letters written to owners <i>re</i> nuisances	625
Notices served under Canal Boats Acts ...	25
Reports sent to Surveyor <i>re</i> dangerous buildings, etc.	90
Reports sent to Water Company <i>re</i> waste of water	145
Number of rooms disinfected	339
Houses from which bedding was destroyed and new bedding provided	13
Number of reports sent to schools <i>re</i> infectious diseases	196
Samples of water taken for analysis	8

TABLE II.
PRELIMINARY NOTICES SERVED AND NUMBER
OF HOUSES IN CONNECTION WITH NOTICES.

	Notices served.	Houses in connection with Notices.
Filthy and dilapidated houses ...	352	888
Filthy and dilapidated outbuildings ...	101	325
Defective paving and surface channels...	54	105
Defective eaves and downspouting ...	34	86
Insufficient drainage ...	31	99
Foul untrapped or defective drainage ...	13	25
Choked drainage and water-closets ...	186	199
Insufficient privy accommodation ...	6	8
Insufficient ashpit accommodation ...	71	169
Foul, wet, open, and dilapidated privy- middens ...	362	1011
Defective water-closet connections ...	99	242
Fouling of sanitary conveniences used in common ...	347	420
Overcrowded houses or rooms...	90	90
Animals improperly kept ...	49	49
Offensive accumulations ...	6	12
Water in cellars ...	11	11
Insufficient water supply ...	9	17
Houses unfit for habitation ...	2	7
Filthy bakehouses ...	5	5
Filthy workshop ...	1	1
Dairies and cowsheds not kept in accord- ance with regulations ...	5	5
Polluted wells ...	5	5
Slaughter-houses ...	3	3
Miscellaneous ...	46	74
Stripping of walls after infection ...	12	12
	<hr/> 1900	<hr/> 3868

TABLE III.

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS CARRIED OUT IN
DISTRICT IN PURSUANCE OF INSPECTIONS
MADE AND NOTICES SERVED.

Interior of Houses—

Filthy houses cleansed and whitewashed ...	647
Houses without sufficient means of ventilation, window openings, and means of ventilation provided	6
Houses in which repairs to plastering, brick- work or woodwork have been carried out ...	173
Flooded cellars drained or filled in	9

Exterior of Houses—

Defective roofs made watertight	127
Houses without eaves, spouting, or with choked or defective spouting—new spouting provided or existing spouting cleansed and repaired ...	130
Damp external walls. Brickwork repaired or covered with impervious coating	47

Yards and Outbuildings—

Surface paving in yards provided, renewed, or repaired	77
Dangerous wells or cisterns filled in or suitable coverings provided	11
Filthy and dilapidated outbuildings cleansed and repaired	238

Drainage—

Absence of or insufficient drainage. Premises drained and connected to sewer or cesspool...	29
Surface channels abolished and stoneware pipe drains provided	238
Defective drainage relaid or repaired ...	9
Number of manhole inspection chambers pro- vided to drainage systems	183
Foul untrapped drains. Stoneware gully traps fixed	10
Additional gullies fixed	705
Choked drains opened and cleansed... ..	42

Privies, Water-closets, and Ashpits—

Privies abolished	607
Water-closets with flush cisterns substituted for privies	...	...	...	619
Waste water-closets substituted for privies	...			3
Foul, wet and open privy-middens filled in, covered, and ventilated	...	...	...	1
Additional water-closets provided	...	...		1
Dilapidated privies and ashpits repaired	...			10
Percolations of fæcal matter from privies, privies, etc., cemented	...	...	...	99
Galvanised dust bins provided in lieu of ashpits, or where accommodation insufficient				536
Middens abolished and converted into dry ashpits	...	...	...	32
Choked water-closets opened and cleansed	...			139
Defective W.C. connections made good	...			76
Insufficient supply of water to W.C.'s. Flush improved	...	...	...	26
Defective tippers renewed and inspection chambers provided to waste water-closets	...			11
Absence of sufficient urinal accommodation. Urinals provided	...	...	...	4

Keeping of Animals and Offensive Accumulations—

Nuisances from the keeping of swine abated...	19
Fowls or other poultry kept in dwelling houses or so as to be a nuisance—removed from premises	40
Offensive accumulations removed from premises	5

Overcrowding—

Houses overcrowded—numbers reduced	87
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Miscellaneous—

Manure pits provided or repaired	4
Miscellaneous nuisances abated	5
Filthy approaches to privies cleansed by occupiers	33
Vans removed out of district	8

Housing of the Working Classes Act—

Houses unfit for human habitation closed or repaired	10
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Water Supply—

Houses without a proper supply of drinking water—water laid on	24
Polluted wells closed and water laid on from main	...	...	...	9

Factory and Workshops Act—

Filthy and dilapidated bakehouses cleansed or repaired	...	...	...	4
Closet accommodation repaired or cleansed	...	...	...	2
Separate W.C. accommodation provided for females	...	...	...	1

Dairies and Cowsheds—

Cowsheds provided with sufficient means of lighting	...	...	...	2
Cowsheds provided with sufficient means of ventilation	...	...	...	2
Paving repaired in cowsheds	...	...	...	2
Cowsheds drained or drains repaired	...	...	...	3
„ cleansed and limewashed	...	...	...	2

Slaughter-houses—

Galvanised iron tins provided for receptacles of offal	...	...	...	2
Drains or catchpits removed from inside slaughter-houses	2

Infectious Disease—

Walls stripped and cleansed	12
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Total	...	5123
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TABLE IV.—RESULTS OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

Situation of Premises.	Nature of Complaint.	Act under which proceedings instituted.	Result.
No. 41, Great Bridge	Slaughtering on unlicensed premises	Public Health Act, 1875, Sec 169, and Towns Improvement Clauses Act, 1847	Summons dismissed
No. 11 to 19a, Dartmouth Street	Dirty and dilapidated state of houses	Public Health Act, 1875, Sec. 94	After two adjournments, order made for work to be done within 21 days and to pay costs, £1 12s. 6d.
Nos. 3, 5 and 7, Overend Street	Dilapidated state of houses	Do. do.	Summons withdrawn on receipt of undertaking from owners to execute necessary works.
No. 41, Great Bridge	Exposure of unsound meat	Public Health Act, 1875, Sec. 117	Defendant fined £2 and costs.

Food and Drugs Inspector's Report,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1903.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

Herewith I beg to submit a Report of the work carried out under the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts during the year ended December 31st, 1903.

I have obtained 141 samples under the provisions of the above Acts, consisting of the following:—Milk, 66; butter, 44; margarine, 5; coffee and chicory, 2; white pepper, 3; orange quinine, 3; lime juice cordial, 3; lemon squash, 3; camphorated oil, 1; whisky, 9; gin, 1; rum, 1.

These were all submitted to and were analysed by the Public Analyst, who certified 120 samples (85.82 per cent.) as “genuine,” 11 samples (7.80 per cent.) as “inferior,” and 10 samples (7.09 per cent.) as “adulterated.”

All the inferior samples were milks.

The adulterated samples consisted of 6 butters, 3 milks, and 1 rum.

One of the butter samples was found to consist of 100 per cent. margarine, and was also supplied in a wrapper without the word “margarine” appearing thereon.

Proceedings were taken against the vendor and his assistant. They were convicted and fined £17 and £3 4s. costs.

The remaining five adulterated butter samples were obtained from a wholesale dealer, from a consignment of 20 tubs, whilst in course of delivery. These were found to contain an excess of moisture varying from 1.5 per cent. to 4 per cent.

Ten summonses were issued against the vendor for the adulteration and for giving a false warranty.

For the adulteration the cases were dismissed upon payment of costs, £1 5s.; and for giving of false warranties the vendor was convicted and fined £3 and £5 5s. 6d. costs.

One of the samples of margarine was supplied in a wrapper and not marked "margarine" as required, and proceedings were taken in this case, and the vendor was convicted and fined £1 and 19s. costs.

No proceedings have been taken against the vendors of the adulterated milks and rum samples, as the amount of adulteration was in each case not sufficient to justify such action.

In the appended table, I give particulars of the nature, number, and quality of the articles examined.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

GEO. WM. DAVIS,

Inspector.

Nature of Food or Drug.	No. of Samples An'ly's'd	Genuine.	Inferior.	Adulterated.	Cautioned.	Prosecuted.	Convicted.	Amount of Penalty.	Amount of Costs.	Remarks.
								£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Milk	66	52	11	3	3	...	...	...	...	Deficiency of fat, also added water.
Butter	44	38	...	6	...	6	6	20 0 0	9 14 6	100% Margarine, 1.5%, 3.1%, 3.6%, 3.7% and 4% excess moisture.
Margarine	5	5	...	...	...	1	1	1 0 0	19 0 0	For supplying in a wrapper not marked "Margarine."
Coffee and Chicory	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
White Pepper	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Orange Quinine	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lime Juice Cordial	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lemon Squash	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Camphorated Oil	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Whisky	9	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gin	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rum	1	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	1.6% excess water.
	141	120	11	10	4	7	7	21 0 0	10 13 6	

Analyst's Report.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee,
County Borough of West Bromwich.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg herewith to lay before you a summary of the work carried out in your Borough under the Food and Drugs Acts during the year ended December 31st, 1903.

The total number of samples analysed was 141, and the whole of these were officially purchased and submitted to me by Mr. Davis.

In the appended table I give a list of the various foods and drugs upon which I reported, and also state the number of articles that were inferior or adulterated.

Description of Article.	Total Samples examined.	Genuine Samples.	Inferior Samples	Adul- terated Samples
Milk	66	52	11	3
Butter	44	38	...	6
Margarine	5	5	...	...
Pepper	3	3	...	...
Coffee Mixture	2	2	...	...
Orange Quinine Wine	1	1	...	...
Quinine Wine	2	2	...	...
Lime Juice Cordial	3	3	...	...
Lemon Squash... ..	3	3	...	..
Camphorated Oil	1	1	...	...
Spirits	11	10	...	1
	141	120	11	10

The number of articles returned as adulterated was ten, or a percentage of 7.09, a slight decrease on the record of the previous year, when 11 samples, or 8.38 per cent. were condemned.

It is of interest to compare these results with the returns obtained from the whole of England and Wales. In the last extract from the Local Government Board Report on the administration of the Adulteration Acts, 1902-1903, the total number of samples examined is given as 72,321, and of these 6,281, or a percentage of 8.7, were adulterated. The return for the Borough of West Bromwich shows a rather lower, and therefore more favourable result.

Milk, as in previous years, provided almost half the samples submitted to me by the Inspector, and the constant attention given to this universal food year after year has undoubtedly had a beneficial effect on the quality of the article supplied in your Borough.

During the past year only three samples were found to fall below the standard of the Board of Agriculture, and the departure from the limits laid down by the Authority was in each instance only slight. These figures are more favourable than any I have recorded in previous reports.

Six samples of butter were found to be adulterated. In one instance margarine was substituted for butter, and in the other five cases excessive amounts of water were present. In each instance the vendors were proceeded against and fined.

In addition to the above work under the Acts, eight samples of water were analysed. All were found to be more or less contaminated, and were therefore reported to Dr. Manley as being unsafe for drinking purposes.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

HARRY SILVESTER, B.Sc., F.I.C.,
Public Analyst.